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GENDER EQUALITY

STRATEGY 2016 - 2020

**GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT
STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN 2017-2021**

**TOWARDS MORE EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE RESPONSES
TO DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES IN VIET NAM**



Signed:

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ACRONYMS

ADR	Assessment of Development Results
AWP	Annual Work Plan
BPFA	The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
CD	Country Director
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CO	UNDP Viet Nam Country Office
CPD	Country Programme Document
CSO	Civil society organization
DCD	Deputy Country Director
GES	Gender Equality Strategy
GEWE	Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment
GFT	Gender Focal Team
GPT	Governance and Participation Team
GS	Gender Specialist
GSS	Global Staff Survey
GFT	Gender Focal Team
GTG	UN Gender Theme Group
HRM	Human Resources Manager
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
PMs	Programme Managers
PMD	Performance management and development
ROAR	Results Oriented Annual Report
SEDP	Socio- Economic Development Plan
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNV	United Nations Volunteers
UN-SWAP	UN System-wide Action Plan for implementation of the Chief Executive Board Policy on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (2006)

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BACKGROUND

Introduction

The promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment is essential to UNDP's development approach. The UNDP Strategic Plan (2014-2017) reinforces that, 'sustainable human development will not be fully achieved unless women and girls are able to contribute on an equal basis with men and boys to their societies'¹. For this reason, the Plan pursues engagement principles that ensure participation and voice for women - and other groups that face the greatest exclusion and inequalities - as agents of their own development.

The results of the Assessment of Development Results (ADR) of UNDP Viet Nam conducted in 2015 and consultations with key partners and stakeholders found that the CO approach to achieving gender equality results through a gender mainstreaming was limited. Integrating gender equality concerns into the CO's institutional and organizational practices requires a significant step up of efforts and deployment of innovative approaches. To this end, this strategy will guide the CO to move from gender sensitivity to more gender transformative programming i.e. by addressing the causes of gender inequality through strategic actions that seek to transform the unequal power relations between men and women resulting in improved status of women and gender equality.

In 2015, the CO started the UNDP Gender Equality Seal² certification process. Since the beginning of the process, the CO has addressed numerous gaps, built capacities and strengthened internal organizational mechanisms. The Gender Equality Seal exercise provided opportunity for internal stock-taking and revealed progress in a number of areas such as, transformative results on stand-alone initiatives including the Women's Leadership Project and the

¹ UNDP Strategic Plan 2014-2017.

² The UNDP Gender Equality Seal (the Seal) is a corporate quality assurance initiative developed by the UNDP Bureau of Programme and Policy Support (BPPS), in collaboration with UNDP country offices and led by the Gender Team of BPPS. The Seal assesses and acknowledges good performance in delivering transformational development results for gender equality and at the same time provides a holistic framework for integrating all domains of work in order to support organizational change and sustainable development results. Performance is measured according to a set of minimum acceptable quality standards based on international and corporate mandates in the following areas: Management for Gender Equality, Gender Equality Capacities, Enabling Environment, Knowledge Management and Communication, Programmes and Projects, Partnership, and Impact/Results. The Seal has three levels of certification (bronze, silver and gold) and applicants are certified according to their gender equality accomplishments.

innovative initiative to break gender stereotypes.

At the global level, UNDP launched a new Strategic Plan (2014-2017), a new Gender Equality Strategy (GES) (2014-2017), and a new Gender Parity Strategy (2013-2017). The GES and the Gender parity strategy together, provide detailed guidance for UNDP country offices on how to mainstream gender perspectives as they operationalize all aspects of UNDP's Strategic Plan.

Country Context from a Gender Perspective

Outlined below are some of the key underlying gender issues that result in inequalities between women and men and restrict Viet Nam's social and economic advancement. The issues discussed interact together and are both results and causes of gender inequality. These specific issues are highlighted as they hinder UNDP's ability to effectively achieve its objectives.

Gender stereotypes and social norms that restrict and limit women's advancement and social and economic development.

Patriarchal attitudes and deep-rooted gender stereotypes with respect to the responsibilities and roles of women and men in the family and in society result in subordinate roles of women and are reflected in practices such as son preference and early child marriage. The social norm that men are natural leaders, decision makers and risk takers pigeon holes men into, and limits women's access to, certain types of careers and expected roles.

Harmful practices such as child marriage in certain areas greatly hinder the health of women as well as women's ability to be economically independent.

These gender biases and gender stereotypes are promoted in education curriculum and through the media with limited government intervention to counter prevailing beliefs and harmful practices.

Gender stereotypes also strongly affect sexual minorities and individuals who do not conform to gender norms.

Son preference

Within families, there are attitudes and beliefs that favour having sons rather than daughters. The most

common understanding behind son preference is the belief that only sons can carry on family lineage and are responsible for ancestral worship.³ This belief is held by both women and men. This belief manifests in inequalities within the household as well as the public sphere. Its most severe impact is a skewed sex ratio at birth. On average, there are 112.4 boys born for every 100 girls.⁴ However, in some parts of Viet Nam where there is easy access to and more means for abortion services, the rate is as high as 124 boys born for every 100 girls.⁵ The practice of sex selection is increasing and, without intervention, it is predicted that there will be two to four million 'missing women' in Viet Nam by 2025.

Division of domestic work and decision making in family

Women traditionally have the main care giver role in the family; she is responsible for the well-being and health of children, elderly, husband's family and the husband. Women have less of a role in matters outside of the family including interacting with government agencies. Men have traditionally played a small role in home care and child care however greater equality in the household division of labour is seen among younger ages and those with high education levels. Decision making in the family varies depending on the type of decision. Women in general have more control over daily finances while men control large sale and purchases, and land ownership.⁶ It is important to note that it is a common practice for women, once married, to move in with the husband's parents and care for them.

Domestic violence

Related to the subordinate role of women, son preference, and patriarchal values, domestic violence occurs in all sectors of society. A Government study found that 58 percent of ever married women have experienced sexual, physical or emotional violence.⁷

Due to negative stigma related to domestic violence, lack of effective police and government response to perpetrators, an acceptance of violence in the family and the promotion of 'happy family' from the Women's Union, few women speak out and report the violations. As patriarchal values are entrenched, some women are not aware of their right to live free from violence and accept the belief that violence in a relationship is 'normal'. Some women feel it is their duty to endure the violence to have family harmony.



Property and asset ownership

Almost half of Vietnamese women do not own residential land and only one fifth of women own land or houses. At the same time, more than half of men are sole owners of land or houses.⁸ Similarly men often own valuable property such as vehicles or production facilities.

There are several challenges and gaps regarding gender equality in the forestry sector. Forestry institutions are generally gender biased. Although women are the major work force in the forest-related socio-economic sector, the majority of forest land owners are men. Effective representation of women's collective voice is still lacking for equitable sharing of benefits. Although the policy framework is non-discriminatory, there is an absence of a coherent and unified forum for women in programme governance. Gender equality aspects are generally measured quantitatively (e.g. number of participants in meeting) rather than qualitatively (e.g. their role in decision making). Women's greater responsibility for household works prevent them from actively participating and negotiating in forestry planning processes. More importantly, women's role in forestry is mostly limited to fulfilling subsistence needs, whereas men dominate the commercial sector including trade of timber and non-timber products.

Labour, employment and work

Although women have a high labour participation rate, they work in sectors where they are poorly paid and undervalued. At the same time, they are responsible for productive work in the household. Holding the main responsibility for the household often forces women to take informal jobs that pay little and are insecure but have flexible hours.⁹ Women are likely to work in agriculture or small business run by their own families. In such work, health and social insurance is not covered and employees must cover it themselves if they choose to. The result is that few women working in this type of work have any form of social security.

Women face barriers in access to resources and productive assets and technical and vocational training. Such obstacles have created unfavourable patterns in the types of occupations women enter, the quality of the working conditions and the low and insecure earnings.¹⁰

Ethnic minority women have not received the opportunities and results of Viet Nam's economic growth. Poverty among ethnic minorities, especially in remote areas, remains more than three times the national rate.¹¹ Ethnic minority women are

³ Social Determinants of Gender Inequality in Vietnam, 2015

⁴ Viet Nam General Statistic Office, 2014

⁵ Speech of Pham Le Tuan, Deputy Minister of Health, October 18, 2015

⁶ Social Determinants of Gender Inequality in Vietnam, 2015

⁷ The National Study on Domestic Violence against Women in Viet Nam, Viet Nam General Statistics Office (GSO), 2010

⁸ Social Determinants of Gender Inequality in Viet Nam, ISDS 2015

⁹ Viet Nam Common Country Assessment, 2015

¹⁰ UN Viet Nam Common Country Assessment, 2015

¹¹ Based on the latest survey to include disaggregated data (VHLSS 2012), national headcount of 11.1 per cent and ethnic minorities headcount of 34.6 per cent. Based on VHLSS 2014, the poverty headcount was 7.1 per cent (disaggregated data not available). Source for both sets of data: General Statistics Office.



Photo:

particularly affected due to lower labour market participation rates (73 versus 82.2 per cent for men¹²) and women pay lags behind men's by 20 per cent.¹³

Political and social participation

Women are restricted from holding senior decision making positions in the political and administrative government sphere due to an unequal retirement age, perceptions that men are natural leaders, heavy role of women in the household and discriminatory human resource practices that favour men in hiring, promotion and training.

Women's representation in political leadership is below the national targets. In the 2016 election, 27% of National Assembly seats are held by women against the target of 35 per cent in the National Gender Equality Strategy.¹⁴

Due to the limited number of women in decision making positions, the policy making process – from prioritization to implementation and accountability – is limited and problematic as it is not representative and is largely led by men.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ UN-Women, Report on Gender Equality and Inclusive Growth, 2016.

¹⁴ The National Gender Equality Strategy set targets of 30 per cent for 2011 and 35 per cent by 2016.

Despite women being largely impacted by climate change and environmental degradation, few women are in positions of influence to direct the response and mitigation measures.

Opportunities

There are considerable opportunities to advance the gender agenda in Viet Nam. There is a growing civil society, and particularly women's rights organizations, that are holding government accountable to national as well as international commitments. The newly signed Socio-Economic Development Plan (SEDP) 2016-2020 aspires to build an inclusive and sustainable development model balancing economic, social and environmental imperatives so that all citizens benefit from development gains.

UNDP is well placed to work with the private sector, civil society and government to transform the gender norms that restrict Viet Nam's social and economic advancement, to reduce the inequalities between women and men in access to power, and to empower women and girls to take leadership positions.

STRATEGY

Rationale for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Strategy

For the Vietnamese government to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), gender equality and the empowerment of women are essential, as both a stand-alone objective and part of a broader solution to securing sustainable development in Viet Nam.

The UN has committed in the One UN Strategic Plan to achieve women's empowerment and gender equality "through systematic efforts to remove gender biases and discrimination in existing laws, policies, and practices; supporting women's voice and agency through participation in decision-making at all levels; promoting safety and dignity of women and girls; and challenging discriminatory social norms, including through the engagement of men and boys."¹⁵

¹⁵ One UN Strategic Plan 2017-2021

Causality Analysis for Unfulfilled Women Rights in Viet Nam

Cause	Effect	Result
"Society, Policies, Resources"		
"Services, Access, Practices"		"Status"
Social-cultural barriers, traditional beliefs, value systems and attitudes Patriarchy as a pervasive ideology in family, society, and state Poverty – Inequality and Discrimination Socio – cultural barriers prevent women from accessing services Limited financial resources - Ineffective allocation & use of financial resources Gender and Power Relations Discrimination and inequalities Power imbalance between women and men at individual and Stereotyping of women and inequality in women's access to and participation in all community and communication system Gender based violence Gender biased attitudes Lack of Accountability	Lack of public awareness Poor collection and dissemination of gender disaggregated data Poor representation of women's needs and interests Lack of gender sensitive service delivery Lack of strong knowledge base on human rights and women's rights specifically Lack of gender sensitive mitigation & adaptation of climate change and its effect on women's livelihood Lack of enabling environment and gender labor market rigidity and inequalities Low and imbalanced media coverage on women and gender issues Reinforcement of traditional conservative stereotypes in mainstream and social media and government propaganda Lack of control over financial resources Lack of qualitative and quantitative data and evidence based research Insufficient coordinated mechanisms at all levels to promote the advancement of women (Both civil society and government) Lack of mainstreaming women needs in Infrastructure planning Denial of women rights in legislation (Inheritance, access to property, retirement age) Lack of M & E framework Gender machinery marginalized within state apparatus	Limited women's participation in decision making in the public and private sphere Women's voice, interest and perspective marginalized in policy and legislation development and implementation High concentration of women in insecure wage employment or agricultural sector Harmful practices such as abortion of female fetus, child marriage, trafficking of children, Discrimination against women who do not conform to norms

Guiding Frameworks

The guiding frameworks for UNDP's commitment to achieving gender equality and women's empowerment include the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW); the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, 1995 (BPFA); the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women; the International Conference on Population and Development; the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change; the Paris Agreement on Climate Change; Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction; and other aid effectiveness and regional commitments.

Development priorities, and gender-specific policies and strategies of the Vietnamese government are equally instructive to the extent that they promote gender equality or advance an agenda for women's empowerment. The Gender Equality Law, the National Strategy on Gender Equality, the National Plan on Gender Equality and the Socio-Economic Development Plan 2016-2020 all provide the working framework and guide priority setting for this strategy.

The Assessment of Development Results (ADR) of UNDP Viet Nam conducted in 2015 provides a framework within which to implement the corporate mandate of gender mainstreaming in all the country programme outcomes. The 2015 ADR recommended for the CO "to develop and implement a clear office wide gender plan/strategy with accountability mechanisms in place for implementation and achievement of set objectives."¹⁶

The UNDP Gender Equality Strategy 2014-2017 and the UN System-wide Policy on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (SWAP) provides a blueprint for making gender mainstreaming operational within the UN system.

The UNDP Viet Nam programming priorities have been identified and outlined in the Country Programme Document for Viet Nam (CPD) (2017-2021). These include

- Outcome 1: Poverty Eradication and Greater Socioeconomic Equity;
- Outcome 2: Low-carbon, resilient and environmentally sustainable development; and
- Outcome 3: Institutional accountability, people's voice and access to justice.

Within each of these priority areas, key gender

¹⁶ Assessment of Development Results of UNDP in Viet Nam, 2015

equality issues to address have been highlighted and will be expanded upon in this strategy.

Scope

This strategy covers both operations and programming units of UNDP. It is to be used by all UNDP staff as a decision making guide and a compass to best direct their work.

The timeframe of strategy covers from 2017 to 2021, aligned with the present cycle of UN One Strategic Plan and the UNDP Country Programme Document which also end in 2021. This CO level Strategy intends to thoroughly deliberate and adopt the UNDP corporate Gender Equality Strategy 2014-2017 as well as adapt it to the context of CO.

Strategic Objectives

For UNDP Viet Nam to effectively operationalize gender mainstreaming and to support the achievement of gender equality in Viet Nam, there are three primary targets to focus on.

Objective 1: Creating an enabling environment for a gender responsive organization

The first target is internal to the Country Office – and will create an enabling environment for a gender responsive organization by institutionalizing systems, removing discriminatory practices and attitudes and cultivating a positive work culture. Without addressing the internal attitudes, structures, and practices within UNDP, it will be impossible to work effectively with partners to achieve specific gender equality results.

There are many opportunities to build on in this strategic area. In 2015, the CO conducted an assessment of practices and attitudes on gender equality within the office and has started to address the challenges identified in the assessment. UNDP globally has set clear standards regarding gender parity, prevention of harassment and gender mainstreaming practices, and the CO has instituted a Gender Focal Team to effectively address the identified gaps and challenges.

Ultimately, a gender responsive country office will have staff who are effective and vocal advocates of gender equality within the office and with all partners and beneficiaries, gender parity at all staff levels, a dynamic and active Gender Focal Team with strong leadership from the senior management team on gender equality issues and a safe work environment

free from discriminatory attitudes and practices.

Objective 2: Effectively achieve gender equality results through UNDP programmes.

The gender equality results identified for all programming areas are:

- Women fully participate in and benefit from National Targeted Programmes on Sustainable Poverty Reduction and on New Rural Development, national SDG rollout, and social protection policy reform, with particular attention paid to ethnic minority women.
- Women are empowered for disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation, and engage fully in REDD+ and biodiversity protection initiatives
- Increased representation of women in leadership and decision-making positions, increased access to justice for vulnerable women, and laws, policies and social norms combat gender bias and discrimination,

A twin track approach will be used across the country programme to best achieve these gender equality results. The twin track employs both mainstreaming of gender throughout a programme as well as implementing women's empowerment specific interventions. Implementing women's empowerment stand-alone initiatives is important as often upholding women's rights is marginalized when integrated with other initiatives.

The systems and tools to gender mainstream are identified in the action plan and with reference

documentation provided in the Annex.

Objective 3: Promoting partnerships and nurturing partners to effectively achieve gender equality results.

UNDP will partner with government stakeholders, private sector, other UN agencies and CSOs following a human rights based approach to programming,

The Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action provide the frameworks and good practice principles for adopting gender equality as a priority development issue. They both offer concrete opportunities to ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment initiatives benefit from scaled up Official Development Assistance (ODA). The Declaration and the Agenda for Action can be tools to empower women and men and to strengthen the responsiveness of governments to citizens.

In UNDP, core and non-core resources will be committed to the achievement of gender equality results in all programme areas. In the next five years, UNDP will expand its partnerships with private sector and civil society to effectively achieve its results.

With other international partners, UNDP Viet Nam will continue to hold the role of facilitator, supporting dialogue at national and local levels as a crucial step towards policy and legislation formulation. This facilitative role is reinforced by UNDP's institutional expertise, supported by its communities of practice and knowledge networks, its continuing search for cutting-edge approaches



Photo:

and methods, and its ability to broker knowledge from other sources. These factors enable UNDP to play its role as a professional adviser to Viet Nam in developing policy options based on good practices and innovative thinking.

Objective 1 – Create gender responsive country office through gender mainstreaming human resources and management

There are three focus areas to support the development of a gender responsive country office. These are outlined below

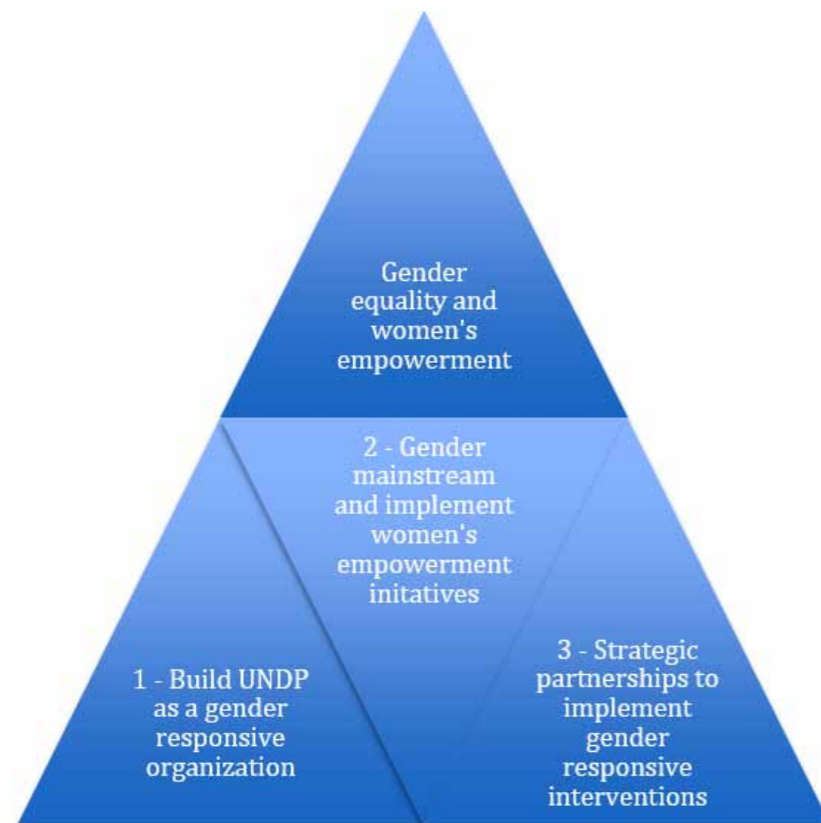
Increase staff understanding of gender equality, gender analysis and gender mainstreaming and ability to advocate for and promote gender equality with varied audience

Increasing the ability of staff to effectively champion gender equality will be a core focus of the office.

Some of the barriers identified:

- Despite some training being offered on gender mainstreaming to staff and that all staff have completed the online gender journey course, a number of UNDP programme staff lack the required skills of gender analysis and do not adopt a gender perspective to the projects they are responsible for.
- Limited gender analysis is reflected in the project documents that are produced. Many projects are designed with limited gender analysis and do not address issues such as women's representation and participation in the target group and in decision making, access to resources of both genders (education, skills, knowledge, social services, mobility, etc.), as well as rights and social norms and values.
- There is a misconception among some staff that if women and men contribute to and equally benefit from UNDP programmes; that the projects are gender neutral.
- There is a belief that if the implementing partner does not prioritize gender equality result, then the project cannot include gender results in the design.
- Few staff advocate openly in forums with donors and partners for women's rights, gender

Diagram A – Three strategic objectives to effectively achieve Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Viet Nam



ACTION PLAN

equality and women's empowerment.

To build the capacity of staff, the following activities are identified:

- The hiring process will systematically assess GE values and competency and understanding of gender mainstreaming, gender analysis, and advocacy for women's rights and gender equality. Adopt gender aware interviewing guidelines and techniques in the recruitment process to ensure that all new staff members and consultants possess the basic understanding, skills and experience required to work in gender-sensitive manner.
- Conduct a series of training sessions on gender mainstreaming for new and current staff members that goes beyond the mandatory short course in the orientation for new staff. The capacity of Programme Officers should be developed through practical training on regular basis. It is also suggested that the Gender Focal Team starts by assisting Programme Officers in suggesting ways and means of mainstreaming gender in their projects and engendering their project documents.
- As gender mainstreaming is also about advocacy, networking and knowledge management, it is important to develop the capacity of Programme Officers to be able to carry out these activities. They should combine the knowledge about ways to influence policy and also be skilled on program and project design.
- Specific training provided to all Senior Managers and Programme Officers to build comfort and ability to effectively communicate with partners and donor community the gender equality and women's empowerment strategy, rationale for gender mainstreaming
- Guidelines, checklists, templates for gender analysis and mainstreaming is provided through trainings and synthesized
- An assessment on gender capacity has been done with all programme managers and professional staff, and a Learning Plan has been developed to address the gaps

Enhance institutional mechanisms and structures to gender mainstream in all CO operations

The CO has a Gender Focal point at the Assistant Country Director level. In 2015, a Gender Focal Team was developed chaired by the Country Director.

Members are comprised of staff from Operations Unit, each Programme Units, Technical Specialists, Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist in addition to the Communication Officer. The Terms of Reference and the Composition of the Gender Focal Team can be found in [Annex 2: Gender Focal Team terms of reference](#).

The Gender Focal Team members dedicate between 10 and 20 percent of their time to gender related issues and will work in collaboration with all UNDP's operation and programme teams to implement the GEWE strategy and to ensure that gender equality is an integral part of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of UNDP programme and policies.

Although there is an active Gender Focal Team, all staff are responsible for creating a gender responsive office and achieving gender equality results in programming. Therefore, all staff will identify a gender-related performance goal in the Performance Management and Development (PMD) process and supervisors are responsible to help staff identify an appropriate goal, to work towards achieving the goal and to hold the staff member accountable through the PMD process. Guidance on how to integrate gender equality in the PMD can be found [here](#).

Some of the gaps in gender responsive institutional mechanisms include:

- There is no dedicated Gender Equality specialist within the CO and few GE specialists are hired as full time or part time consultants
- Few staff have gender equality specific tasks in job description and few staff held accountable to achieve gender equality results
- Managers have in the past have not routinely prioritized mechanisms for a gender responsive office or the achievement of gender equality results in programming
- Programme units often lack specific data and knowledge on the gender dimensions of their thematic focus areas, limiting their ability to develop GE results in programme design.

To build gender responsive office structures and practices, the following activities are identified:

- Team Leader meetings, chaired by the Country Director, to review progress on the GEWE Action Plan once per quarter.
- Mobilise the resources enabling the hire of a Gender Equality specialist (secondment or

partner fully funded position) charged with supporting all staff to implement the GEWE strategy, to lead training and capacity building initiatives of staff and partners, to identify innovative approaches to gender mainstreaming in projects, to support senior management with accountability measures to ensure GE results met.

- Re-establish the Gender Focal Team as a working level task force with leadership by the Country Director/Deputy Country Director and with membership from teams across the office.
- Review the job descriptions, specifically members of the GFT and Team leaders, to ensure that their appropriate role/tasks in supporting achievement of gender equality results is sufficiently incorporated; GFT members to include their expected contribution in PMD targets.
- All staff identify gender-related performance goal in the Performance Management and Development (PMD) process and supervisors are responsible to help staff identify an appropriate goal, to work towards achieving the goal and to hold the staff member accountable through the PMD process.
- Further develop programme planning, monitoring and reporting systems that promote a regular review of evidence on the status of women in respective programme areas, building a knowledge base on the differential development status of men and women.

Improve implementation of gender sensitive human resources and management policies at CO level

The Viet Nam UNDP CO is committed to promote gender equality through its human resource and management policies. The CO has adopted several corporate policies to ensure a gender sensitive organization including the Work and Life Balance policy and Zero-Tolerance to Sexual Harassment and Abuse of Authority Policy.

Within the framework of this strategy, UNDP CO will continue to ensure gender equality within the recruitment process while monitoring gender balance in staff at all levels. The UNDP CO senior management has addressed the implementation of policies that promote a healthy working environment and the implementation of the Work and Life Balance Policy to attract and retain female professionals and to promote male professional's role in their family and care of the children and elderly. A full list of all the policies that support a gender responsive work environment is included in [Annex 3: List of UNDP policies that support gender responsive work environment](#).

As of 2016 in the CO, parity levels reflect more women than men in most categories except P4 where there are 75 percent men and 25 percent women. Other staff categories to monitor for parity are National Officer and Support staff positions where there are more women than men – the ratio between men/women is 31% and 69% for national



Photo:

Staff Snapshot – September 2016

Indicators	Male	%	Female	%	Total
CO national Officers (FTA)	7	30%	16	70%	23
CO General Support (FTA)	11	26%	31	74%	42
CO national officers (SC)	1	33%	2	66%	3
CO support staff (SC)	0	0%	1	100%	1
International Staff (IP)	7	58%	5	42%	12
Total Staff	26		55		81

officers, and 26% and 74% for support staff. At present there are no women drivers. Some of the gaps in implementing gender responsive human resource policies include:

- UNDP interview process does not systematically assess values related to GE nor knowledge on gender equality and women's empowerment and gender mainstreaming
- Gender parity not seen at all staffing categories

To support implementation of gender responsive policies, the following activities are identified:

- Monitor gender balance in all Committees, Appointment and Promotion Panels and decision making bodies. In case of imbalances, review membership criteria of concerned committees and panels
- Continue promotion of work and life balance policy including flexible working arrangements
- Continue zero tolerance to any form of harassment and abuse of power where the prevention policy is fully implemented

Enhanced knowledge and communication materials that promote gender equality

The CO website, Facebook and twitter often showcase the projects and initiatives that address gender equality. The CO will continue to communicate in a gender sensitive manner and increase the gender responsive materials for all programming areas

To further enhance the knowledge and communication materials that promote gender equality, the following activities are identified:

- CO communication strategy is well gender mainstreamed and sets gender equality targets Use of gender sensitive communication guide by all project staff when developing reports and communication materials. See [Annex 4:](#)

[Guidelines for gender sensitive language](#) for gender sensitive communication guide.

- Gender sensitive communication guide shared with all partners and consultants responsible for developing UNDP communication materials
- All speeches, talking points and briefing notes provide gender sensitive data and include messages advocating for a minimum of one of the gender equality results

Objective 2 - Implement gender responsive programmes, projects and activities

The GEWE strategy will utilize a twin track approach across the country programme to best achieve gender equality results. The twin track employs both mainstreaming of gender throughout a programme as well as implementing women empowerment specific interventions. Implementing women's empowerment stand-alone initiatives is important as often upholding women's rights is marginalized when integrated with other initiatives. Our situation analysis shows that Viet Nam's socio-economic advancement is greatly hindered by inequalities between women and men. Therefore, specific interventions are necessary to empower women.

Focused Interventions

Defined as efforts aimed at creating fundamental structural changes in institutions, policies, legislation and allocation of resources to promote gender equality between men and women based on the specific needs in the country.

Mainstreaming gender

Defined as considering men's and women's needs, interests and experience in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs. At all levels, an assessment of men's and women's rights, access to resources and decision-making provide guidance for

mainstreaming efforts.

Some of the gaps in implementing gender responsive programmes, projects and activities include:

Limited accountability measures to gender mainstream

- Limited accountability measures in place or not implemented for staff to achieve Gender Equality results in their daily work or in their projects
- Gender equality issues in projects often only raised in the LPAC review, usually only by one person
- Annual work plans approved without an assessment of how the project activities are designed to achieve GE results or the percentage of budget on GE
- Institutional assessments to identify potential partners do not systematically include assessment and evaluation of partner’s approach to gender equality

Limited projects designed to achieve gender equality results

- Few projects designed as a stand-alone

women’s empowerment or gender equality project or to have a gender specific outcome. As shown in the table below, the majority of current (2016) projects are designed as no or not significant contribution to gender equality

- As shown in the table below, there is a small percentage of programming budget allocated to projects that fully or significantly address gender equality
- Identifying the UNDP gender marker is conducted after a project is designed not as a target for the design of the project

Decision making related to projects largely taken by men

- Project approval and annual work plan approval are largely conducted solely by men (97% of Project Director positions in 35 projects are held by men; UNDP Deputy Country Director and Assistant Country Director positions are held only by men)
- Lack of women senior decision makers in implementing current projects (97% of Project Director positions in 35 projects are held by men)

Number of Projects (as of July 2016)	GEN0	GEN1	GEN2	GEN3	Total
GPT		9	6	2	17
IEG		12			12
PAT		6			6
SDC	3	18	4		25
Grand Total	3 (5%)	45 (75%)	10 (17%)	2 (3%)	60

**note that the 1 GEN3 projects (women’s leadership) will close in Dec 2016 and the other GEN 3 has closed already (but is still in ATLAS)

% of budget by GEN and unit (the Gender Seal Target is over 15% of programme budget is on GEN 2 or GEN 3):

% of budget by unit (as of July 2016)	GEN0	GEN1	GEN2	GEN3	Total
GPT		3%	5%	1%	9%
IEG		12%			12%
PAT		16%			16%
SDC	8%	30%	25%		63%
Grand Total	8%	61%	30%	1%	100%

To institutionalizing this objective, programmes will conduct the following activities:

- All new projects will be designed to achieve a minimum of one of the gender equality or women’s empowerment results of this strategy.
- A minimum of 70 percent of the Country Office programming budget will be used for projects that are marked as GEN 3 or GEN 2. See [Annex 5: Gender marker identification](#) for description of Gender Marker identification. All new projects will target GEN 2 or GEN 3 marker.
- Gender Action Plans developed for every existing project and for all new projects. See [Annex 6: Project gender action plan template](#) for template of Gender Action Plan
- To ensure that gender mainstreaming activities in projects and specific women’s empowerment or gender equality initiatives are implemented, funding budget lines specific to gender will be developed in both the project budget in the DPO as well as in annual work plans.
- All projects at the CO undertake a gender analysis as first step in programme/project preparation, including through using existing programme and engagement funds to finance gender analysis for project formulation. See [Annex 7: Gender analysis guidelines](#) for gender analysis tools and [Annex 8: UNDP checklist for gender mainstreaming in projects](#) for checklist for gender mainstreaming in project proposals
- Gender mainstreaming tools adopted and disseminated to all programmes and units. See [Annex 9: UNDP checklist for gender mainstreaming in work planning](#) for the UNDP

checklist for gender mainstreaming in work planning.

- Use programme performance indicators that are gender sensitive and provide sex-disaggregated data on programme beneficiaries
- Integrate gender perspective in Monitoring and Evaluation Plan. See [Annex 10: UNDP Viet Nam Policy on Gender-Responsive Evaluation](#) to design and implement gender responsive monitoring and evaluation plans.
- Conduct continuous capacity development sessions on gender mainstreaming to all UNDP CO Staff, project management unit staff and partners

Gender equality results at programme level

UNDP has identified the following gender equality and women’s empowerment approaches and results to be achieved in the three core areas identified in the country programme document:

Poverty Eradication and Greater Socioeconomic Equity

Through the UNDP work on multidimensional poverty reduction, closing disparities between geographical areas and groups, tackling growing vulnerabilities, ethnic minority development, urbanization, urban management, and social protection, the following results are targeted:

- Women benefit from **National Targeted**



Photo:

Programmes on Sustainable Poverty Reduction and on New Rural Development Potential disparities among men and women in participating in and benefiting from different policies for multidimensional poverty reduction and social protection within the National Targeted Programmes (on Sustainable Poverty Reduction and on New Rural Development), the Government's Master Plan for Social Assistance Reform, and local poverty reduction programmes (e.g. of HCMC) are identified and addressed to ensure more inclusive and equitable growth and achieve Sustainable Development Goals 1, 5 and 10.

- Participation of women in **National SDG Rollout** National SDG rollout, action planning and first five years of implementation have been achieved for both men and women, in which a proper and balanced participation of women are emphasized, with particular reference to the gender targets and indicators within all SDGs.
- **Gender-sensitive Urban Development** Urbanization and urban development (e.g. in Ho Chi Minh City) are managed inclusively with benefits accruing equally for all men and women. Particular attention will be paid to migrant women and women in informal sector, through cross-sectoral solutions, under a liveable cities model, bringing together multiple dimensions of the Sustainable Development Goals.
- **National statistics** support gender equality and women's empowerment

SDG indicators and their requirements for disaggregation, especially sex-disaggregation are nationalized and integrated in Vietnam's SDG monitoring system, related data are widely disseminated for monitoring and policy making of gender equality and women empowerment.

- Empowerment of **Ethnic Minority Women** Empowerment of ethnic minority women and men is promoted through UNDP support to National Targeted Programmes (on Sustainable Poverty Reduction and on New Rural Development) which will help to realize women's untapped potential for expanded production and delivering social and human development improvements.
- Gender-sensitive **Social Assistance Reform** UNDP will support the roll-out of the Government's Master Plan for Social Assistance Reform to deliver transformational changes to the social protection system, with special attention to ensuring women's access to social assistance, particularly the introduction of mother's benefit scheme. Building on its experience with institutional reform and strong United Nations partnerships, UNDP will promote a life-cycle-based approach and increased public investment, enabling higher transfer levels and universal coverage. UNDP will thereby contribute to strengthening the resilience of the near-poor and lower middle-income groups, especially women, preventing them from falling back into poverty.

Low-carbon, resilient and environmentally sustainable development

Under Outcome 2 of the CPD UNDP will deliver gender results in disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation, REDD+ programming, and biodiversity.

- Women Empowered for **Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation** Through its work on coastal resilience building and DRR, and in line with the outcomes of the Regional Asia Pacific Conference on Gender and Disaster Risk Reduction held in Viet Nam in 2016, over the programme cycle, UNDP work with Government and civil society to:
 - Review existing disaster data collection and loss and damage systems and formats to determine data gaps from a gender perspective and provide recommendations on enhancing systems to make them more gender sensitive.
 - Conduct gender analysis of disaster risks building on available PDNA and ROAP tools and use the gender disseminate results to inform national and local DRR policy development including the revised DRR Strategy and Action Plans (being revised).
 - Further strengthen the role of women in implementation of the national CBDRM (The Programme 1002) ensuring that current quotas for participation are adhered to and monitored, and conduct consultations on how to develop the capacity and knowledge of women at the local level to take up leadership roles.
 - Facilitate sharing of knowledge and practices of women and men, particularly at-risk groups from local, through research, stakeholder consultations and web-based information sharing at national and regional level, to facilitate adaption to climate change and effective response to disasters.
 - Develop women's leadership in areas of planning and monitoring capacity to develop resilient livelihoods in coastal areas through partnerships with Women's Union and community DRM groups and identify sustainable alternative livelihoods under the upcoming GCF project which that are empowering for women; and facilitate more equal access to control to resources in the management of coastal areas including mangroves.
 - Promote roles and participation of women and women's organizations in

implementing resilient housing supported activities in the UNDP-Green Climate Fund project through engagement of women and women's organization in the M&E of the project activities.

- Raise the awareness of disaster managers, main stakeholders (planners, decision makers) on gender roles in DRR and support through including gender material in workshops and manuals, and by providing e-learning and other options for increasing expertise.
- Aim to reach a target that women and diverse groups must be represented (at least 40%) in national and local mechanisms responsible for developing disaster preparedness, response and recovery decisions such as community based disaster risk management technical working groups, project training courses and related activities.
- Gender equality in REDD+: Reducing Emission from Deforestation and Forest Degradation UN-REDD Vietnam Programme carried out a case study on Gender Assessment for REDD+ activities in 2013, which highlighted some specific issues. Building on that, UNDP aims to work with the government and relevant stakeholders to:
 - Incorporate gender equality into the revision and development of national, provincial and local REDD+ strategies and action plans, such as National REDD Action Plan (NRAP), 5 PRAPs and 30 SiRAPs supported by the programme.
 - Take into account social, culture, and traditional knowledge of women and promote participation of women in planning and implementation of REDD+, for example through giving priority to and women's organizations and entrepreneurs.
 - Develop technical expertise of all concerned stakeholders to facilitate gender equality in REDD+ planning and implementation – through "Training of Trainers". Each pilot province is expected to have trained facilitators (trainers) on gender mainstreaming.
 - Support to empower women to represent their collective voice by organizing self-help women groups in close collaboration with Women Union in each province.
 - Promote a minimum quota (40%) for women in planning and implementation of REDD+ activities.
 - Promote shared ownership on allocated



Photo:

forest lands, and to ensure that all the forest protection contracts and land allocation certificates (Red book) supported by the programme have names of both husband and wife.

- Monitoring frameworks PRAP and SiRAPs must have gender related indicators
- Biodiversity interventions support women's engagement and empowerment:
 - The Biodiversity portfolio has been implementing various projects to support Viet Nam to improve and strengthen Biodiversity conservation in the country. The interventions designed under five projects of this portfolio for the next five years include certain actions targeting gender issues. Since scientific data show that women play an important role in livelihood activities at the targeted Biosphere Reserves. In some provinces most of the works related to agricultural production and herbal plant collection and cultivation are done by ethnic minority women, while in other provinces women play a critical role in tourism and other livelihood activities. Therefore, over the next five years, the projects will implement activities include:
 - The project activities focusing on tourism and sustainable land and forest management will provide new opportunities for employment and income stability for the local community, and women in particular.
 - Specific attention will be focussed on ensuring the active participation of local women, particularly in developing sustainable livelihoods and ecotourism in the project sites.
 - Capacity building and training will be specifically focused on ensuring that women are actively engaged in all aspects of the pilot activities, and efforts will be made to consult and engage local women's organizations to improve sources of income for women and enhance their engagement in these pilot programs.
 - Fully integrate both men and women in the operation of the establishment of Biodiversity conservation/protected areas, and the planning and implementation of the activities at commune and village level.
 - Training for sustainable livelihood will incorporate a gender perspective, to ensure that the needs of women, who frequently

form a marginalized group in the fishery and aquaculture sector, are taken into account and that implementation the project could promote gender equality. Thus, benefits made to households and communities should include safeguards to ensure gender equality

- Work with both groups of males and females to enhance their participation in the project activities as well as to promote gender equality in management of Biodiversity protected areas, and in livelihoods improvement, in order to (1) empower women's role in awareness raising and education activities; (2) engage women in adopting more wetlands-friendly practices; (3) awareness raising and capacity building on climate change adaptation and natural disaster prevention for women.
- Ensure the active participation of women in access and benefit sharing, particularly in growing and harvest of herbal plants, product development and marketing, monitoring and evaluation of Mutual Agreement Term provisions and community Traditional Knowledge protection protocols, as well and the implementation of social and economic development activities and ensuring that women have an equal participation in the project activities as men.
- The women from the Red Dao ethnic group, the masters and repositories of the techniques of herbal bathing product development, including the methods for harvest of herbal plant materials will continue to play this key role, and in terms of the cultivation, transportation and marketing, both men and women will be actively engaged
- The strong participatory role envisaged for the ethnic minority women in the pilots will also contribute to ensuring social security in the highlands
- Ensure that gender consideration becomes an integral part of the newly proposed project strategy. During the project inception the mandatory UNDP gender marking will be applied.

[Institutional accountability, people's voice and access to justice](#)

In line with the commitments under outcome 3 of the CPD 2017-21, UNDP will support the promotion of women in leadership roles in the political, judicial and administrative spheres, ensure increased access to justice for vulnerable women, and combat barriers

and stereotypes including those on gender and sexual orientation. Specific priority will be placed on the following result areas:

- Increase **access to legal services for vulnerable women**
UNDP will engage in advocacy on access to legal aid services (including in the short term on the Law on Legal Aid) to highlight the lack of access these essential services for vulnerable women. UNDP will partner with other UN agencies and gender equality focused civil society organizations and academia. The existing partnership with the Ho Chi Minh City University of Law will be expanded to develop legal clinics for vulnerable women by equipping law students with the skills to support women who require legal services.
- Increase **women's representation and gender awareness in judiciary**
UNDP will support increased capacity for female Ministry of Justice representatives and female members of the judiciary to strengthen the judiciary's capacity for improved legal services and support gender responsive justice.
- Promote **women and youth in administrative and political leadership**
Building on experience and partnerships in the previous programme cycle, UNDP will scale up training programmes (including mentorship) to women and youth in administrative and political agencies, providing them with tools,

knowledge and confidence to contribute to career advancement in administrative and political leadership.

- Address **barriers and stereotypes** such as those on gender, ethnicity and sexual orientation
UNDP will continue policy advocacy efforts to ensure legislation that supports elimination of barriers and stereotypes based on gender (including advocacy on the Law on Anti-Discrimination). Communications and campaigns will be targeted on youth, in universities and online through social media, to raise awareness of discrimination and promote the breaking of barriers and stereotypes.
- Increase understanding of policy makers of differences between men and **women's experiences in public administration**
UNDP will prepare a revised survey tool for the next five year cycle of the Provincial Governance and Public Administration Performance Index (PAPI), based on consultations with stakeholders and partners, to analyze and better capture women's experiences of public administration. The revised survey will include questions which better reflect experiences of public administration interactions, particular by women, and communicate to policy makers the difference in PAPI results between women and men's experiences.



Photo:

Objective 3 - Promoting partnerships and nurturing partners to effectively achieve gender equality results

UNDP Viet Nam has been engaged in different levels of partnership to guarantee that work in Viet Nam remains coordinated and productive. These partnerships include UN agencies, International and local NGOs/CSOs, the private sector and government at central and local levels.

With the growing and vibrant private sector, including companies with corporate social responsibility practices, there are opportunities to explore for joint collaboration. The private sector can employ innovative technology and approaches to tackle social problems that can be scaled up and implemented quickly.

Civil society is quickly developing in Viet Nam and playing an increasing role in generating relevant data, implementing innovative and effective initiatives and holding government accountable to national and international commitments and implementation of legislation. Government and CSO dialogue and collaboration is needed to achieve the SDGs and UNDP has an important role to play in promoting and facilitating this process.

UNDP will expand its work directly with civil society and also to facilitate collaboration between government and civil society. Criteria to select CSO partners will include organizations who demonstrate a rights-based approach and who value gender equality. Efforts will be increased to systematically engage with women's rights organizations and networks including Gender and Community Development Network (GENCOMNET), Centre for Studies and Applied Science in Gender, Family, Women and Adolescents (CSAGA), and Centre for Education Promotion and Empowerment of Women (CEPEW) for programming in the northern region. Exploratory research is required to identify key women's rights organizations based throughout and active in provinces/regions where UNDP programmes.

Interagency collaboration has been led by UNDP in the previous One Plan and is expected to continue. UNDP will continue to collaborate with UNWomen, UNFPA, UNICEF, and UNODC particularly on initiatives to increase women's role in climate change mitigation, end gender based violence campaigns, advocacy for gender mainstreaming in legislation, breaking gender stereotypes, and advocacy for increasing women's representation in

parliament and government.

To support promotion of gender responsive partnerships, the following activities are identified:

- Identify effective partnerships (government, CSO or private sector), thorough institutional assessments of potential partners (current and new) will be conducted to assess the values and approaches to gender equality, how women's voices are promoted, and results on gender equality.
- Build and strengthen the capacities of national counterparts, partners and stakeholders to address gender issues throughout the project implementation through role modeling, maintaining standards, and training on gender equality and gender mainstreaming to ensure that partners can incorporate principles of gender equality and women's empowerment into the joint initiatives work. Priority focus to be placed on partners that constitute the national gender machinery, and UN-partnership with UN Women.
- Prioritize gender equality and women's empowerment in the Country Office Resource Mobilization Strategy.
- Conduct scan of Corporate Social Responsibility policies and activities of large companies to help identify companies with motive to empower women and to achieve gender equality results.
- Use core funding to run joint initiatives with private sector and civil society
- Ensure gender parity in decision making and leadership positions in all UNDP projects
- Convene all relevant stakeholders (government, CSO, private sector, bi-laterals) to share information, promote collaboration and effectively advocate for promotion of women's voice and agency, increased women's political participation and improved representation of women in government
- Conduct training sessions on gender mainstreaming for project management unit staff including National Project Managers/Directors and Project Coordinators

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

An annual action plan for each year of implementation of the strategy will be developed by the gender focal team, and will be monitored against a targets on a quarterly basis and evaluated on an annual basis. The progress in implementing the Action Plan will be discussed in Senior Management Team meetings. The evaluation will take place at the end of October and the results will be documented in the ROAR, and other reporting documents. The annual action plan will be developed by end of November in line with the Country Office business plan (COBP), and other annual planning documents.

It is the responsibility of the Country Office Deputy Country Director to monitor the implementation on a quarterly basis. It is the responsibility of the Country Office Deputy Country Director to have the evaluation conducted and the results used to guide the development of the COBP. The Gender Focal Team will support monitoring and evaluation.

The budget to monitor and evaluate implementation of the Action Plan will be part of the CO Monitoring and Evaluation budget.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Objective 1: 10 percent of the learning budget will be used to build capacity of staff to advocate effectively for gender equality. Funding or in-kind cooperation (such as with UNV) will be allocated for hiring of a full-time gender specialist.

Objective 2: By 2017, a minimum of 70 percent of the Country Office programming budget will be used for projects that are marked as GEN 3 or GEN 2. To ensure that gender mainstreaming activities in projects and specific women's empowerment or gender equality initiatives are implemented, funding budget lines will be developed in both the project budget in the DPO as well as in annual work plans. Use of these funds will be monitored regularly and evaluated as part of the mid-term and end of project evaluation.

Objective 3: Financial resources and resource mobilisation opportunities for joint collaborative initiatives with UN agencies and other partnerships to support GEWE will be identified as part of programme formulation consultations and programme design in late 2016.

